

SCHOOL LAUNCH BASICS

Building Committees

A productive and efficient board will utilize committees to alleviate the workload on board members and to allow other individuals to contribute their unique abilities, strengths and talents to the development of your school. A Committee is a body of one or more persons appointed or elected by the board to consider, or investigate, or take action in regard to, certain matters or subjects, or to do all of these things.

Committee Basics

- **Committee Chair:** A board member should chair a committee. The Committee Chair is appointed by the Board Chair.
- **Committee Members:** Board members can serve on committees, but committee members can be selected from outside of the board. While board members may sit on a committee, the number of board members on any given committee cannot create a “Quorum.” The board must decide on the method of choosing members, committee duties and committee reporting mechanisms.
- **Criteria for Selection:** Committee members should be selected based on their ability, willingness and expertise to meaningfully carryout the objective for which the committee was formed.
- **Roles & Responsibilities:** Committees are considered “working” committees in that they are tasked with an objective which will require that they research, organize, contribute expertise, provide labor, and then formally report their activities, findings or recommendations to the board.
- **Recommendations from Committees:** Committees will vote to determine their recommendations to the board, the result of which will be considered and voted upon by the board. The committee vote does not constitute a board vote.
- **Dissolution:** Once a committee’s work is complete, the Board Chair may elect to dissolve the committee. Committees can be established that exist in perpetuity.

Facilities Committee

The facilities committee is responsible for all aspects of the building occupied by the school. This includes construction management (as a liaison with HighMark), furniture, supplies, logistics associated with move-in, etc. The Facilities committee will also recommend a strategy for upkeep & maintenance (Janitorial, snow removal, etc.) The following represents many of the tasks that would be overseen by a Facilities Chair.

1. Develop & Manages facilities budget (in conjunction with Finance Chair)
2. Liaison with HighMark Schools for all building issues.
 1. Establish a weekly coordination meeting for updates and issues.
 2. Visit site as needed.
 3. Walkthrough & Punch List coordination
 4. Lease or Municipal Bond Planning
3. Presents site & floor plan, color selection for exterior & interior to board for approval.
4. Selects furniture, supplies and vendors for school startup. Presents Purchase order Requests to finance committee for ordering.
5. Inventory of all furniture, equipment and supplies.
6. Contingency Plan – in case building is behind
7. Temporary storage facilities – to take delivery before building is ready
8. Manages logistics between committees (i.e. delivery of curriculum during construction, parents to assemble desks, move-in, etc.)
9. Selects Alarm & Elevator Monitoring company
10. Selection/Design of Playground equipment
11. Telecommunications provider & installation (coordinated with Technology Chair)
12. Selection & coordination with snow removal & landscape maintenance partners
13. Compliance with State & municipal entities.
14. Conduct monthly fire drills
15. Coordinate all warranty & repair work with Contractor / Owner / Subcontractors.

Marketing & Communications Committee

This Marketing/Communications is responsible for developing the school logo & brand as well as maintaining proper brand standards throughout the school. This committee's single largest task initially will be to attract students to the school through public awareness and advertising campaigns.

1. Develop/manage overall brand
 - a. School Logo
 - b. School colors
 - c. Develop brand standards manual
 - d. Letterhead
 - e. Logoed apparel
 - f. Create tag line or support phrases for school mission
 - g. Select Mascot (if desired) or other
 - h. Refine school mission statement
2. Manages Public Relations , communications & outreach
 - a. Dissemination of school mission
 - b. Consistency in message delivery
3. Develops and manages marketing and awareness campaign to draw students.
 - a. Advertising
 - b. Flyers
 - c. Site signs
 - d. Word-of-mouth campaigns (viral marketing)
 - e. Website, etc.
4. Create website Look & Feel as well as content
(not to be confused with Website Development)
5. Work on School Dress Code with Student Life Committee

Enrollment & Registration Committee

The Enrollment Committee is responsible for capturing all student information for families desiring to attend the school and to coordinate and conduct all lottery and registration activities. If done manually, this can be an onerous task. HighMark recommends that the committee utilize the web as much as possible to minimize manual data entry and to reduce the number of resources required to complete this activity. Please note that volunteers will still be required to verify student information over the phone or at enrollment meetings. HighMark Schools recommends that each board contact someone who knows how to collect the data and present it for registration without having to reinvent the wheel. Brad Van Skyhawk (801-949-1202 or brad@vanskyhawk.org) is an excellent resource who will defer payment until startup funds begin to flow. He has developed tools to run enrollment and registration and is currently working on a lottery program.

1. Recommends data to capture for “Intent to Enroll”
2. Develops web interface to capture data
 - a. Highmark recommended PHP & MySQL for database development (contact HighMark for more information – Kary Burns 801-706-6658)
3. Manages entire enrollment & registration process
 - b. Web enrollment
 - c. Database of interested students
4. Coordinates with school districts for records transfer in/out of the school.
5. Registration Packet basics
 - d. *Registration Card*
 - e. *Student Health Profile & Doctor Form*
 - f. *Immunization or exemption*
 - g. *Enrolled in Special programs (gifted & talented or Special Ed)*
 - h. *Disciplinary History*
 - i. *Special notices*
 - j. *Household income qualification (for free and reduced lunch)*
 - k. *Future students form*
 - l. *Kindergarten registration forms*
6. **Holding A Lottery:** The chair of this committee will also be responsible for conducting a lottery. A properly conducted lottery is absolutely critical to 1) maintain the perception of fairness in the minds of parents, and 2) to be in compliance with state law and 3) receive federal startup funds. Each year, your school will fill open seats at the school via a random selection process. It is important to establish lottery rules and that abide by them completely.
 - a. All students must go through the lottery, even if they are given preference as a founding family. Make sure that all of your founding families submit their names to the enrollment system.
 - b. The school should accept all applications for consideration in the random selection process via an online enrollment system.

- c. Applicants not selected but who desire to be considered for subsequent school years must re-apply each year. The starting and ending dates of the open application period for the upcoming school year should be posted on the school's web site.
- d. The dates and times of all random selection sessions should be determined by the Board of Directors or by an administrative designee.
- e. All random selection sessions should be held as open, public meetings at the school and should be posted on the school's website with plenty of advance notice.
- f. The results of all random selection sessions should be made available for review.
- g. Parents of applicants should not be required to attend the random selection sessions for those applicants to be considered.

7. Lottery or Random Selection Process Procedures

- a. Hold Random Selection Sessions (lotteries) only if an open seat is available.
- b. When a random selection session is held, all of the applicants in the following applicant pools are considered, in this order:
 1. **Founding Families Pool** – The students of founding families, as prescribed by Federal regulations. Make sure your enrollment database has a field in it to designate a founding family.
 2. **Existing Students Pool** (not applicable for 1st year schools)– All students currently attending the school who have not declared, in writing, their intent to withdraw for the upcoming school year.
 3. **Sibling Priority Waitlist** – All siblings of students in the Existing Students Pool who are not themselves registered students at the school. NOTE – This is a sequenced list.
 4. **Open Enrollment Applicant Pool** – All applicants who were submitted via the online enrollment system during the open application period.
 5. **Post-Open Enrollment Applicant Pool** – All applicants who were submitted after the open application period.
- c. All applicants in all pools shall be considered. At the time of consideration, an applicant shall be assigned to one of three possible statuses:
 - **Selected** – The applicant is guaranteed a seat at the school pending Confirmation of Placement.
 - **Sibling Priority** – The applicant is placed on a per-grade sequenced sibling priority waitlist.
 - **Not Selected** – No seat was available for the applicant at the time of consideration.

d. LOTTERY PROCESS ITEMS ACTION ITEMS:

6. Assemble the enrollment packet for immediate access from the website following the posting of the all lottery results. You will eliminate a lot of frustration if you will do this and make the process much less labor intensive.
7. If you work with Brand Van Skyhawk on your enrollment process:
 - a. He will make your registration packet downloadable from the website. Once your packet has been created, he will put it into a PDF format that will automatically print the family information onto the enrollment packet that they can print from home and deliver to you.
 - b. Get the registration packet to him well in advance of your first lottery so that he can integrate it into an automated enrollment process.
 - c. Inform parents that they will see lottery results online and will have the ability to print the enrollment packet online for each child.
8. Set a date for all families to turn in the completed enrollment packets, with a signature authorizing the request for records from their previous school. We recommend a 1-2 week maximum time frame. Schedule time at a local library to have them deliver them by hand or give them a P.O. Box number.
9. Let families know that failure to turn in a complete packet (with the possible exception of immunization/physical forms) will result in the loss of their seats.
10. Inform parents that it is illegal to sign enrollment documents for two schools simultaneously. Once they turn in their signed packet, they are committing to Providence (you can do this in a nice way).

di. PRE LOTTERY TO DO'S WITH PARENTS

11. Notify all parents to Login and verify their enrollment information (address, names, birthdates, grades, etc.). This is very important. Parents often
12. Tell them when the lottery will take place. Post the lottery date and location on the website. The lottery has to be public, but you may not want to advertise it for everyone to show. Make sure families know that they do not need to be present to be accepted and that they will be notified within 48 hrs of the lottery.

dii. POST LOTTERY PROCESS REMINDERS

13. Make sure that you notify all families by email of the lottery results.
14. Post all lottery results on the web with 24 hours.
 - a. Make Sure you use a Login Password. You might consider a process where students can come to a local library to check

their results in person and drop off their registration packets.

- b. Never post personal information regarding families on the web without using a secure and protected method (i.e. login/password).
15. Never completely delete families from the database, simply change their status to Withdrawn (or SelectionStatus=-1 in Brad's database) You may want to market or contact families in the future.

Finance & Compliance: (Usually chaired by Treasurer)

The Finance Committee is responsible for properly managing all inflows and outflows of funds from state and federal sources as well as grants. Note: A parent-teacher organization may have the option of managing their own budget from fund raisers. HighMark recommends that the school consider an outsourced business manager who knows the business for managing and reporting on school finance issues. HighMark does not provide these services but recommends **Charter Solutions** (Lincoln Fillmore 548-0144). While the cost of outsourced solutions may be higher than hiring an in-house business manager, the benefits of outsourcing far outweigh the increase in cost. Charter Solutions will work for free until funds flow. They also provide backup with multiple business managers and have the experience and expertise of managing multiple school budgets. Charter Solutions will also provide services

6. Manages overall school Budget.
7. Fiscal responsibility
8. Selects Accounting Platform – most of our schools have used either PeachTree or QuickBooks to keep the process simpler.
9. Recommends accounting standards & guidelines
10. Provides purchasing policy and procedures to all committees/board members.
11. Provides purchasing services for all purchase order requests from other committees.
12. Fundraising through grants or fundraisers in conjunction with Student Life Committee
13. **Federal Startup Funds** are available for your school. You must complete an application (available on the state’s website <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/charterschools/funding.htm>). The quality and thoughtfulness of your application will more than likely impact the amount you that receive. Most often, your funds are available for the first three years of operation. Please note that you can potentially lose the funds if you are not in compliance with admission regulations (lottery, preference, etc.) or if you use the funds for things other than what is approved (see below). HighMark recommends that you contact previous schools who have applied for startup funds as well as Charter Solutions (548-0144) for assistance.
 - a. Permitted Uses of Federal Startup Funds:
 1. Post-award planning and design of the educational program
 2. Professional development of teachers and other staff
 3. Initial implementation of the charter school, including:
 - a. Informing the community about the school,
 - b. Acquiring necessary equipment and supplies
 - c. Acquiring or developing curriculum materials
 - d. Other initial operational costs
 - b. Non-Permitted Uses:
 1. Capital expenses, such as leases, remodeling, technology leases
 2. Playgrounds
 3. Vans, tractors, bobcats

4. Any salary once the school has opened except for staff who continue in curriculum development and preparation in first year. No teaching or administrator salary expenses once school has opened.
 5. Professional dues or memberships
 6. ADA compliance work without third party documentation
 7. Elevators or water main valves in leased facilities
 8. Costs for expeditions (travel, etc.)
 9. Hiring/recruitment
 10. On-going operational costs
14. Assures that the school is in compliance with the school's Charter, as well as all state, federal or other municipal regulations as a school.
 15. Assures that the school has a complete set of legal documents and/or policies and procedures that will help project the school from unforeseen liabilities, lawsuits or loss of funds due to being out of compliance.
 16. Assures that the school is properly insured
 - a. Risk Management (State has an excellent Risk Management Program)
 - b. Insurance coverage on the facility
 17. Establishes a strategy to handle benefits for employees
 - a. Health Insurance (Selects provider and pricing)
 - b. Retirement (Utah State Retirement, 401, 403b, etc.)
 - c. Incentive programs, etc.
 18. Completes the application of a to the IRS to become a legitimate non-profit (501c3) entity. This step is often completed during the first year of operation.
 19. Establishes payroll process & procedures
 - a. Never miss or payroll
 - b. Often outsourced to companies like ADP, Payroll Services an outsourced Business Management Service such as (**Charter Solutions 548-0144**)
 20. Recommends the school's Business Manager or outsourced Business Management Service.
- 16. Curriculum:** The curriculum committee is charged with making sure a that the school begins the year with a complete and comprehensive curriculum, in line with the state core and with the school's charter.
1. Manages curriculum budget
 2. Researches curriculum providers (note: be sure to check references of other schools using curriculum choices are reputable with current users of the products).
 3. Recommends curriculum selections to the board
 4. Provides vendor/purchase info to accounting to acquire curriculum
 5. Makes adjustments as needed.
 6. Presents, communicates and coordinates training to teachers/administration & parents.

17. Technology: The technology committee's first task is to work with the Marketing and Communications Committee to develop the school's launch website. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE SITE CONTAIN A WEB-BASED DATABASE FORM TO COLLECT INTERESTED FAMILIES FOR A LOTTERY. THIS INITIAL SITE SHOULD BE ONLINE NO LATER THAN JULY OF THE YEAR PRECEDING SCHOOL OPENING. The Technology Committee will work in conjunction with the Enrollment & Marketing/Communications Committees to develop this tool. The Technology Committee will then focus on developing a comprehensive technology plan for the school; including computer providers, operating systems, network, etc.

1. Recommends overall technology plan
2. Develop launch website with ENROLLMENT FORM
 - a. Recommended Database: MySQL (a Free Open-Source database)
 - b. Recommended Fields (contact Brad Van Skyhawk 801-949-1202)
3. Plan & manage technology budget
4. Internet & Website
 - a. Develops web infrastructure
 - b. Select a hosting (i.e. godaddy.com , networksolutions.com) who will host Email & SQL databases as part of the basic service.
 - c. Setup school email accounts.
 - d. Manages website updates
 - e. Coordinates content with Marketing & Communications
5. Recommends purchases for:
 - a. Computers & network equipment
 - b. Smartboards/projectors , and other technology items .
 - c. Phone System
6. Recommends which **Student Information System (SIS)** will be used by the school. The SIS system includes the ability to manage attendance, grade book, scheduling, library, school lunch programs, etc. Student Information Systems providers include:
 - a. Powerschool (being acquired by Pearson)
<http://www.apple.com/education/powerschool>
 - b. SchoolMaster www.schoolmaster.com
 - c. Centerpoint (Pearson) <http://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.com>
 - d. Win School by Chancery <http://www.chancery.com> (also being acquired by Pearson)
 - e. RenWeb www.renweb.com (used by several Utah Charter Schools)
 - f. SIS provided for free by the State of Utah (note: most schools who use SIS are not happy with the system or its capabilities)
7. Select an Internet Provider to the school.
 - a. Utah Education Network (UEN) provides internet access to most schools for free. The service generally includes a router.
 - b. Contact Claire Gardner at UEN (801-575-5507) cgardner@media.utah.edu for more information about this program.

18. Parent Engagement/Involvement: This committee works primarily to capture and coordinate volunteers and fund raise during the first year of operation. The committee then turns the focus to developing a comprehensive Parent organization that encourages families to contribute time and resources to the school.

1. Recruit volunteers from parent body
2. Establish a Parent Organization similar to the PTA that will allow parents to contribute financially as well as with their time to the school. The organization president is often automatically considered a board member as the state board requires a parent representative be on each charter school board.
3. Create volunteer database (in conjunction with Technology Committee) to categorize by name, volunteer expertise, time available, etc. Include all necessary contact information.

19. Human Resources: The HR committee is tasked with developing all of the hiring guidelines, processes and procedures. This committee will also work in conjunction with the Finance Committee to recommend benefits and establish policies and procedures for employees.

1. Recommends hiring guidelines
2. Develops Employee handbook
3. Develops policies for new employees
4. Establishes procedures and process for hiring / termination
5. Prepares policies related New Employee packet
 - a. Assignment Overview
 - b. School training / Ethics / Calendar / Payroll / Forms / Handbook
 - c. Explanation and Overview of pay schedules / how it works.
 - d. Telephone
 - e. Asset or key assignments
 - f. Email
 - g. Password assignments
 - h. Systems entry (SIS)
 - i. W4 - Tax & SS
 - j. I9 - Homeland Security
 - k. Signed Employee Agreement / Terms of Employment
 - l. Benefits ret/insurances
 - m. Background check ***(make sure you do this for every employee!)***
 - n. Cactus Verification

20. Student Life Committee: This committee is responsible for developing the school experience outside of the classroom (from the student's perspective):

1. Lunch Plan
2. Uniforms / Dress Code
3. Student & Family Handbook
4. Special Events (carnivals, fund raisers, activities, service projects, etc)
5. School pictures & year book